



Hector De La Torre

Media Advisory

Assembly Member 50th District

For Immediate Release
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De La Torre Holds Update on Railyard Pollution

Assemblyman invites community, stakeholders to provide input at important briefing

Commerce, CA – Assemblymember Hector De La Torre (D - South Gate), along with key state agencies, will lead a community forum on the toxic hot spots in and around the central railyards in Los Angeles and the City of Commerce. According to the California Air Resources Board (CARB) there were about 1,300 premature deaths in the South Coast Air Basin due to diesel exhaust emissions in 2000. It is estimated that diesel emissions account for more than 70 percent of the potential cancer risk from air pollution.

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WHO: Assemblymember Hector De La Torre
Community Members, Environmental Organizations
Representatives from Southern California Air Quality Management District, (AQMD)

WHAT: Work together with community and businesses to discuss solutions and mitigation measures to reduce toxic hot spots in the Southeast region.

WHY: The Commerce Railyard, in Los Angeles County, is one of the largest intermodal railyards in California and the nation. In November 2007, a health assessment report was released by CARB finding emission that levels surrounding the railyard were alarmingly high and a significant contributing factor to high asthma and cancer rates among neighbors in surrounding communities.

WHERE: Bandini Elementary, 2318 Coutts Ave., Commerce, CA

WHEN: Monday, July 28, 2008 @ 6:15 p.m.

Background:

The Los Angeles Times reported that, due to exposure to diesel soot from the Commerce Railyard and other industrial activity, residents of the Bandini and Ayers-Leonis neighborhoods in Commerce are between 70-140 percent more likely to contract cancer.

Diesel contains more than 40 air contaminants including benzene, arsenic, nickel, nitrogen oxides and formaldehyde. According to CARB, Health effects of diesel exhaust include:

- Coughing
- Irritation of eyes and lungs
- Allergic reactions
- Lightheadedness and Nausea
- Inflammations in the lungs
- Damage to lung tissue
- Reduction of bodies resistance to respiratory infections
- Aggravation of chronic respiratory diseases